

REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application in the Office Action dated March 20, 2007. Claims 1 and 11 are canceled herein without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Claims 2-5, 7-10, 12-15, and 18 - 20 were previously canceled. Claims 6, 16, 17, 22 and 23 are pending. Independent claims 22 and 23 are added, and dependent claims 6 and 16 are amended.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph

Claims 1, 6, 11, 16, and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner states that the original specification does not disclose “the continuous loop pattern extends over almost an entire surface of the wrapping paper and loops adjacent in the longitudinal direction of the wrapping paper are connected to each other with an overlap”, as recited in claims 1 and 11.

In order to overcome this rejection, Applicants have canceled claims 1 and 11, and have added new independent claims 22 and 23, each of which recites “wherein the inner adhesive region constitutes a continuous loop pattern with loops extending laterally over almost an entire width of the wrapping paper as viewed in development of the wrapping paper, the loops of the continuous loop pattern being arranged at predetermined intervals and

extending in a spiral-shaped pattern in a longitudinal direction of the wrapping paper as viewed in the development of the wrapping paper, the longitudinal direction being parallel to a length of the cigarette(s)". Support for this subject matter can be seen, for example, in FIG. 3, and at page 9, lines 21-29 of the original specification.

The Applicants respectfully submit that the claims, as amended, are fully supported by and adequately described in the written description of the invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In order to overcome this rejection, the Applicants have canceled claims 1 and 11, and have added new independent claims 22 and 23 to correct the deficiency specifically pointed out by the Examiner. The Applicants respectfully submit that the claims, as amended, particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1, 6, 11, 16, and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaneki et al. (U.S. 6,568,402) in view of Aronoff et al. (U.S. 5,107,866),

and further in view of Fietkau (U.S. 2002/0023655A1). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Added Independent Claims 22 and 23

While not conceding the Examiner's rejection but merely to advance the prosecution of the present application, independent claim 22 has been added to recite a combination of elements, including *inter alia*

wrapping paper wound around the filter elements;

a single forming paper wound around the wrapping paper; and

a single tip paper wound around the forming paper, the forming paper and the tip paper extending along an entire length of plain filter element and the charcoal filter element,

wherein an inner adhesive region is provided between the wrapping paper and the filter elements for bonding the wrapping paper and the filter elements to each other, the inner adhesive region having a part applied with adhesive and continuously extending in a circumferential direction of the filter elements,

an intermediate adhesive region is provided between the forming paper and the wrapping paper for bonding the forming paper to the wrapping paper, the intermediate adhesive region having a part applied with the adhesive and continuously extending in the circumferential direction of the filter elements,

an outer adhesive region is provided between the tip paper and the forming paper for bonding the tip paper to the forming paper.

In addition, independent claim 23 has been added to recite a combination of method steps, including *inter alia*

winding a single forming paper around the wrapping paper;

winding a single tip paper around the single forming paper, the forming paper and the tip paper extending along an entire length of the filter rod;

providing an inner adhesive region between the paper and the filter member for bonding the wrapping paper and the filter rod to each other, the inner adhesive region having a part applied with adhesive and continuously extending in a circumferential direction of the filter member;

providing an intermediate adhesive region between the forming paper and the wrapping paper for bonding the forming paper to the wrapping paper, the intermediate adhesive region having a part applied with the adhesive and continuously extending in the circumferential direction of the filter member; and

providing an outer adhesive region between the tip paper and the forming paper for bonding the tip paper to the forming paper.

In contrast to claim 22 and 23 of the present invention, Kaneki et al. FIG. 4 merely discloses a single wrapper paper 12 wrapped around two individual wrapping papers 41, 42, and 5. Kaneki et al. FIG. 5 merely discloses a pair of wrapping papers 12, one of which is wrapped around each of the filter elements 41, 42. Here tip paper 13 is wrapped around the the pair of wrapping papers 12.

Arnoff et al. merely disclose a single wrapper 11. Fietkau merely discloses a single web 27.

Thus, no combination of Kaneki et al., Arnoff et al., and Fietkau can teach or suggest “wrapping paper wound around the filter elements; a single forming paper wound around the wrapping paper; and a single tip paper wound around the forming paper, the forming paper and the tip paper extending along an entire length of plain filter element and the charcoal filter element (as in claim 22), or

“winding a single forming paper around the wrapping paper; winding a single tip paper around the single forming paper, the forming paper and the tip paper extending along an entire length of the filter rod” (as in claim 23).

At least for the reasons described above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of features as set forth in each of independent claims 22 and 23 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Kaneki et al., Aronoff et al., and Fietkau

Therefore, claims 22 and 23 are in condition for allowance.

Further, dependent claims 6, 16, and 17 are in condition for allowance due to their dependency from allowable independent claims, or due to the additional novel limitations set forth therein.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) are respectfully requested.

All pending claims are now in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

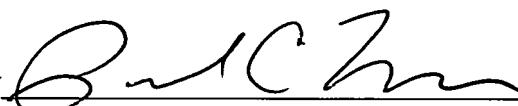
All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 205-8000.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

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